A

SHORT and PLAIN ACCOUNT OF Religion.

For the Instruction of Families, by being often read in them.

Recommended especially to those under his Charge.

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To Governours of Families.

YOU have here laid before you a Scheme of Religion, or the Subſtance of thoſe things which the Miniſters of Chriſt are continually inculcating; and in the Method you are wont to hear them from me. And you are earneſtly Beſeeched and Exhorted in the Name of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, to ſtudy theſe things your ſelves, and to Inſtruct your Families in them; and for that end to cauſe this Account of Religion to be frequently and ſeriouſly read to them. That ſo both you and they may have Minds ſtored with the Subſtance of Religion, and may attend on the Publick Preaching thereof, with Conſcience and with Profit; and may thereby be edified in Knowledge and Holineſs unto Life Eternal.

A

Short and Plain ACCOUNT OF RELIGION,

For the Instruction of Families, by being often read in them.

IT is fad to consider, how all sorts of Men put off from themselves the Care of Religion; which is every ones most necessary concern, and chiefest Interest. The Richer sort, are so taken up with the pleasures and delights of this World, that they have no time for it: The Poorer, so busied to get the necessary accommodations of Life, that they take themselves to be wholly excus'd from minding it. But let both consider what Religion is, and they will discern the vanity of their several pleas and excuses.

Natural.

Religion every ones duty and interest.

For, Religion is the *Skill of ordering our selves so, as to please God, and to obtain eternal Life.* Religion consists in the Government of our Desires, Inclinations and Affections, that they may not lead us into an unreasonable and pernicious Choice, or engage us in evil Works. The *Rule* of Religion is the Will

of God, declared by our Conſcience, and in his Word: The *End* of Religion is to render us capable of the favour and love of God, and of a happy Portion in Life Eternal. Now what in all Reaſon ſhould every one be ſo concerned for, as that he may not diſhonour and abuſe himſelf, nor be engaged in ſhameful and pernicious ways? And what greater intereſt can any Man have, than to make God his Friend in this Life, and to be happy for ever in the next? And what is more fit and juſt both in it ſelf, and in order to ſo great an end, than that the Righteous Will of God be heartily done by us? Without Reconciliation unto that Will of God, it is impoſſible to have him our Friend here, or hereafter; but being in a State of Enmity and Contradiction to him, we muſt be under his diſpleaſure, and liable to his Almighty Anger, which is the moſt miſerable Condition that can be. (*Joh.* 17. 3. *Job* 8. 28. *Eccleſ.* 12. 13.)

It is therefore ignorance of Religion, that rendereth Men ſo negligent thereof: Whereas right Knowledge doth in a manner conſtrain Men to practiſe accordingly; or elſe leaves them ſelf-condemned, and ſtung moſt grievouſly by their own Minds, if they are not prevailed with, to do what is reaſonable, juſt and good, what is their neceſſary Duty and higheſt intereſt. It is therefore a moſt charitable Deſign to the Souls of Men (which this addreſs to them travails withal *viz.*) to give ſuch a brief and plain Account of Religion, as may help them to a right Knowledge thereof, and influence, and perſwade to a ſuitable Practice.

The grounds and principles of Religion.

1ſt. Now the *Being* of God is the firſt and great *Principle* of Religion; the *Nature* of God is the *Reaſon*; and the *Will* of God the *Rule* of it.

1.

The Being of God. If there be *one neceſſary ſupream being that is the cauſe of all things*; then we (and all things) depend upon this Author of our Beings; he hath a Right as well as Power to diſpoſe of, and rule us as he pleaſeth; and we are bound to be obſervant of him, to ſubmit our ſelves to his Rule, and to be ſatisfied with his Will: And that there is ſuch a Being above us, whoſe we are, and upon whom we entirely depend; no Man can doubt, that will but open his Eyes and uſe his Reaſon. For how elſe came this World to be made? Or how came the firſt Man into Being? Whence are thoſe perfections in Men, and thoſe excellent properties in other Creatures, which neither they themſelves, nor blind Chance can be the Authors of, but are manifeſtly the *Effects* of ſome moſt excellent and perfect *Cauſe*? We

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are therefore the Creatures of God the Great Creator, ſubject to him that made us, and to that Law of our Creation which he hath put us under: *i. e.* We are bound to keep that Station and Order in which he hath ſet us, both with reſpect to himſelf, and our fellow Creatures, and to obſerve and do thoſe things which are agreeable thereunto. If a Father hath ſuch right in his Children, as to Rule and Govern them for their good; and the Rebellion of Children againſt their Parents is Monſtrous and Unnatural: How much more ſo is our Rebellion againſt God our Heavenly Father? For *we are his offſpring, and his eternal power and God-head are ſeen from the Creation of the World, ſo that we are without excuſe.* (*Acts* 17.25, 28. *Rom.*1.20.)

2. *The Nature of God.*

This God our Creatour is infinitely Great, and can Controll, Puniſh and Deſtroy, or Help, Reward and Bleſs us as he pleaſeth; ſo alſo he is infinitely good, Righteous and True, and requireth nothing of us but what is right and good. Such is the excellency of his Nature, that we may expect from him all that is fit and good, all that benefit and kindneſs, that is, Conſiſtent with Wiſdom and Holineſs. Such a Father we ought moſt readily to Obſerve and Obey; and we imitate his amiable Nature, when we do his righteous Will. (*Deut.* 32.4. *Pſal.* 73.25. *Mat.* 19.17. *Mat.* 5.48.)

3. *Providence.*

The Creatour is the Lord of all things, hath a Right in, and Authority over them; and God who is all Power, Wiſdom and Goodneſs, can't be thought to neglect and deſert the Beings which he hath made, but doth actually inſpect and govern them. So that we come into this World, continue in it, and go out of it, by his Providence: Are always under his Eye, and in his Hand; and therefore continually obliged in Duty and Intereſt to Obſerve and Regard him. *Acts* 17. 24. *Dan.* 4. 34, 35. 1 *Tim.* 4. 10.)

4. *Difference of moral good and evil.*

By what we know of God, of our Selves, and other Beings, we unavoidably diſcern a difference of moral Good and Evil; and it is through horrible neglect and abuſe of our ſelves, that our Conſciences retain not a lively and powerful Senſation thereof. Some things will appear (upon the leaſt Conſideration) to be juſt and reaſonable, good for us and for all Men, perfective of our Nature and Kind: Others to be Unreaſonable, Unrighteous, Shameful, Pernicious, contrary to Nature, deſtructive of ourſelves, and of Mankind. By following the former, we imitate God and become like him; by the latter, we

debase our selves, walk contrary unto God, and become unreasonable and like the Brute Beasts, yea worse than they who do according to the Nature and Powers that God hath given them.

This then is the Law of God witnessed in our Consciences, *That we abhor that which is evil, and cleave unto that which is good*; by shewing us what is good, he declareth what he requireth of us; for his Will is, That we do what is right and good towards our selves and others; that we reverence the God that made us, and keep that Order which he hath established for the common good. So that Vertue is both our Wisdom and our Duty; but Vice is Folly and Rebellion: It resists the Constitution and Authority of God, and worketh confusion in his Kingdom. Therefore Conscience that condemneth vicious Actions, doth also terrifie the doers of them with the expectation and fear of Divine Vengeance. (*Isa.* 5. 20. *Rom.* 2. 15, 16 *Gen.* 4. 7. *Isa.* 45. 9.)

5. *Future State.* From the former Premises 'tis reasonable to conclude, That the Holy and Righteous God will for ever maintain that difference of moral good and evil which he hath made: and since this is not sufficiently done by his present Providence, that he will determine the future States of Men, according to what they have been and done in this. Righteous Men have reason to hope, that their good God and Father will do them all the good they are capable of; and consequently make them happy in a better State after this, as they are capable of being. For Men by Virtue improve their Capacity of future Happiness: but Vice lays a Foundation only for Misery and Wretchedness. (*Rom.* 2. 6. *Lyc. Rom.* 6. 23.)

6. *Rules of Practice.* Now if we firmly imbrace these Principles, they do mightily engage us to a suitable Religious Practice. If we thus think of God our Maker, and of our selves his Creatures, we must see the Reason and necessity of keeping the Laws of our Creation; which require us to be and do what is right and meet, towards God, to our fellow Creatures, and to our selves. Whenever we seriously think and reflect upon the former Principles, we are convinced of the necessity and goodness of the following Laws or Rules of Practice, *viz.*

1. *Piety.* That we ought to study the Divine Nature, and meditate upon the Excellencies thereof, and to acknowledge them by suitable affections of Reverence, Love and Trust; to give unto God supream Honour and Worship; and to submit our selves to his most wise and holy Will. (*John* 17. 3. *Mat.* 4. 10. *Acts* 5. 29.)

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That we carefully abstain from doing injury to others; and that we make restitution for any wrong which we have done; and that we do them all the right we can; and as we our selves would not have our Lives assaulted, our Reputation lessen'd, our Trust abused, our Bed defiled, our Relations debauched, our Estates damaged by Violence or Fraud; so must we be careful of the like rights and interests of other Men, *doing unto them as we would they should do unto us,* (*Rom.* 13. 7, 8. 1 *Thes.* 4. 6. *Mark* 10. 19. 2. *Justice.*

And as we would not be treated rigorously by others, so must we deal equally with them: favourably interpreting severe Laws, not insisting upon our utmost right to their great damage, not exacting their Labour or Service beyond their Strength, not grieving or discouraging them by the use of our Authority, nor offending them by the use of our Liberty. (*Mat.* 7.12. *Colos.* 4. 1. *Rom.* 14. 15, 21.) 3. *Equity.*

It is also reasonable and good, and the Will of God, that Mankind should heartily Love each other; taking pleasure in the content and profit of their Brethren, and doing them what good they can, and forgiving their involuntary or retracted injuries: For he that honoureth another, doth himself desire to be esteemed; and he that pitieth and relieveth his Brother, hath also infirmities and needs of his own. Every one in his turn needeth forbearance and forgiveness; and all Men commend in others, and expect from them, Candour, and Gentleness, and Kindness, and other such like Fruits of Sincere Benevolence. (*Rom.* 12. 10, 13, 15, 16. *Gal.* 6. 1, 2.) 4. *Charity.*

It is likewise fit and necessary, that we should be peaceably minded, and that we love and maintain good Order; that we be content with our Station, and study to be quiet and to do our own business; that we endeavour to maintain a right Understanding and good agreement amongst Men, and to reconcile and make them friends again, when they happen to differ; for these things are good and profitable for Men. (*Rom.* 12. 18. 1 *Thes.* 4. 11. *Mat.* 5. 9.) 5. *Peace.*

It is our Duty and our Interest also, to moderate and govern all our Inclinations and Passions by Reason, which God hath given us for that purpose. Reason being in Man (what instinct is in Brutes) his Nature or Governing Principle 6. *Sobriety or Purity.*

and Faculty. This is the most difficult part of our Duty, and that which secures the whole. In the disorder of our Inclinations and Passions lies the Force and Strength of Temptation, and he that hath attained to the due government of these, will have but little provocation to do contrary to his Duty either towards God or Man. Now the Rules of this Self-government are such as these,

That we think no better of our selves than we deserve; but keep always a just Sense of our absolute dependance upon God, and of our great Weakness, manifold Errours, Imperfections and Faults, which is *Humility*. (*Mat.* 5. 3. *Rom.* 12. 13.)

That we moderate the desire and use of all Delights, by Reason, and the expectation of a better Life; and gratifie no Appetite with the dishonour of God, or to our own, or other Mens Dammage, which is *Temperance*. (*John* 6. 27. *Coloss.* 3. 1, 2. 1 *Per.* 2. 11.)

That we suffer no Passion to put us out of the use of our Reason, or to vent it self in Expressions and Actions that are indecent or injurious, which is *Moderation*. (*Mat.* 5. 22. *Ephes.* 4. 31. *Phil.* 4. 5.)

That we be content with our Condition of Life, and bear with an even and calm Spirit the Vicissitudes, Misfortunes, and Afflictions which are common to Men, fearing more to do than to suffer evil, and studying to adorn every Lot, which is *Fortitude and Patience*. (*Heb.* 13 5. *Phil.* 4. 12. *Rom.* 12. 12.)

That we study the Conduct and Government of our selves; aim at those things which excel, and contrive to do our good Works in fit Season, and in the best manner, which is *Prudence*. (*Mat.* 10. 16. *Eph.* 5. 15. *Phil.* 4. 8. *Prov.* 14. 8.)

This is the *Law written in the Heart*; the fitness and necessity of these Rules is witnessed in every ones Conscience; and the *Love* and *Practice* of them is that Religion which Divine Revelation Travails to restore and maintain. If we Consult and Reverence our own Consciences and the Word of God, we shall be very uneasy upon every Transgression of any of these Laws, but find great peace and satisfaction of Spirit in the keeping of them.

Depravation of Religion, and Corruption of Mankind.

30. When through the neglect of God, and abuse of themselves, Men had depraved this Religion, by wicked Lives and Idolatrous Worship; they became Reprobate in their Minds, and vile in their Affections; and sunk into a degenerate and forlorn Estate; that was as *Wretched* as it was *Sinful*. (*Gen.* 6. 5. *Rom.* 1. 21, 26, 28.) Since

Since our first Parents indulged their Appetite against Reason, and so Transgressed the Law of God, their Posterity are sunk into Sensuality; and by their own unreasonable Inclinations, by the wicked Example of others, and the Temptations of the World, are betrayed into powerful evil Habits; which make their return to God, and their Duty extreamly difficult.

When Men become Enemies to God, in Temper and Life, they can no longer bear the true Knowledge and Worship of him; whereupon wicked Spirits and evil Men take occasion to set up a false Religion, that may gratifie such who are departed from the True. Such who will not keep God's Laws, are yet willing to compound for their Sins, by costly Sacrifices, and a pompous Service: And this gave occasion and rise to Idolatry, and that to polytheism or the serving of many Gods; and that service was made up of magical Rites, and the most unnatural and abominable Customs, humane Sacrifices, and filthy Mysteries. So that Religion (whose end is to Unite and Assimulate Men unto God, and to perfect their Natures) became the Instrument of Mens Alienation and Departure from God, and of Debauching and Enslaving their Minds, and of filling them with Brutish Lusts, and Diabolical Passions. (*Mich.* 6. 6, 7. *Rom* 1. 21. 2 *Cor.* 8. *Ezek.* 16. 20. *Rom.* 1. 28. *&c.*) *Paganism.*

This growing impiety God testified against and opposed, by the Instructions and Example of those holy Patriarchs, whom he raised up, by frequent intercourse with Men, and special manifestations of his Soveraign Dominion and Power amongst them: By the Translation of *Enoch*, *who walked with God*, by the Deluge of the Old World, and the signal Destruction of the *Sodomites* and others, who had forsaken God, and abused themselves in a most horrible manner. These holy Instructions and Examples, and Divine Facts, were designed to put a stop to the Corruption of Religion and of Men; to enforce the Laws of God, to encourage the Righteous, and to *awe* the Wicked, and to awaken in them a becoming Sense of God, and of their Duty. *Patriarchal Religion.*

But at length God Applyed a most gracious Remedy for the deplorable Condition of lost Men, by a Standing Revelation of the true Religion, given first by *Moses*, and then by Christ.

The Holy Scriptures were written by Holy Men, moved and guided by the holy Ghost, and contain a true History and Account of such Divine Facts, Messages and Revelations, as God saw need- *Holy Scriptures.*

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ful to be transmitted to all Ages of his Church, for the Instruction and Benefit thereof. (*2 Pet.* 1. 21. *2 Tim.* 3. 16.)

These Scriptures are the Records of the *First Covenant*, or old Testament; that is, the Religion which God set up among the *Jews* by *Moses*: And of the *Second Covenant*, or New Testament, i. e. the Religion which God hath set up for all Men by his Son Jesus Christ. (*Heb.* 7. 8, 13.)

1. *Mosaical Religion.* The Ten Commandments are the Substance and chiefest part of God's Covenant with *Israel*; and to keep them in the Worship and Obedience of the True God, was the design of that Dispensation; and the Political and Ceremonial Laws, did Minister to the same End, and were subservient to the Moral, to Effect and Enforce the keeping of them. The Rites were such as the Temper of that People, and the Circumstances of those times required; and they were so many *Signs* between God and his People, *Badges* of the Servants of the True God, and *Memorials and Monitors* of their Obligations to him. God their Creatour, their Redeemer, and their King, dwelt in the midst of them, *That his Fear might be before their Faces that they might not Sin against him*, and he sent them Prophets and Preachers of Righteousness and Repentance, to reprove and threaten their Disobedience, and to perswade them to return to their Duty. And by these he foretold the Coming of Christ, and the setting up of a better State of Religion by him.

2. *Christian Religion.* Now in these last Days God hath spoken unto us by his Son, that Divine Person in whom the *God-head dwelleth Bodily*, i. e. really and manifestly; who came into the World that he might destroy the Works of the Devil, *i. e.* Idolatry and Immorality; that by his Doctrine he might Teach the Laws of God; and by his *Obedience unto Death* vindicate the Honour of them, that he might Bring in Eternal Righteousness, and set up the Kingdom of God, by means most proper, and fitted for all times; and therefore made Perpetual and Unchangeable. (*Heb.* 1. 2, 3. *Colos.* 2. 9. 1 *Joh.* 3. 8.)

I. *Fundamental Principles or Doctrine. Unity of God.* For he hath taught and assured us in the Name of God, That there is but *One God* the Creatour of all things, and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ; and thereby condemned Polytheism or the Worship of many Gods. (*Mat.* 4. 10. 1 *Cor.* 8. 6.

That

That God is not to be Worshipped with Sacrifices or by Images, or with the Pomp introduced by Idolatry; but with the Natural Acts and Expressions of Divine Honour, and proper Tokens of Respect and Reverence; and that the best and most acceptable Service of God, consists in a holy *imitation* of him. (*Joh.* 4. 24. *Mat.* 5. 48.) 2. *True Worship.*

That God who is Propitious in his Nature, is reconciled to sinners in his Son; whose *Obedience* unto Death, doth worthily vindicate, and greatly honour the Laws of God; and his voluntary *Sacrifice* of himself was so well pleasing unto God, that he did thereupon enter into a *Covenant* of Grace and Mercy with Mankind; wherein he hath engaged himself, to forgive the Sins of those who Believe and Repent, and to make them partakers of eternal Life. (*Mat.* 5. 45. *Mark* 10. 44. *John* 10. 17. *Mat.* 26. 28.) 3. *Reconciliation.*

That God sent his Son to be the Saviour of the World, and hath appointed him the *only* Mediatour between God and Man; in whom God speaketh unto us, and by whom we have access unto God, that God hath given him all Power, and made him King and Lord of all things, That he may be the *Author of Eternal Salvation to all them that obey him.* (*Mat.* 3. 17. 1 *Tim.* 2. 5. *Joh.* 5. 22. *Mat.* 28. 18.) 4. *Glory of Christ.*

That this same Lord Jesus shall come in Glory to Judge the World, and shall raise the Dead, and shall doom the Wicked to the Damnation of Hell, and receive the Righteous into Life Eternal. (*Mat.* 25. 31, 46. *John* 5. 27, 28, 29.) 5. *Resurrection and Judgment.*

The Doctrine of Christ then Teacheth, and his Religion obligeth us, to Worship the one true God in a right manner, through one Mediatour; to look for the Mercy of God upon our Repentance without costly Expiations and Sacrifices, and to live Godly, Righteously and Soberly in this World, looking for the glorious Appearance of our Lord Jesus Christ, who shall Raise the Dead, Judge the World, and render to every Man according to his Deeds.

1. Substantial.

The Laws of Christ are either *Principal* and Primary, or *Secondary*, institution s Subservient and Ministring to the former. The Principal Laws, which contain the *Substantial* part of Religion, are the same with those Laws of our Creation, or Rules *The Laws of Christianity. Principal and Primary.*

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of Piety, Righteousness and Purity, which are before recited, and these are delivered and explain'd in the Sermons of our Lord, and inculcated in the writings of his Apostles: and to these he hath added

1. *Faith.* The Law of Faith; that we believe and acknowledge Jesus to be the Christ the Son of God, perswading our Hearts of the *Truth* of his Divine Mission and Doctrine; and of the *importance* of both; and that we publickly profess our Faith and Hope in him, and confess him (if need be) even with the hazard of our Lives. (*Rom.* 16. 26. *Rom.* 9. 10. *Mat.* 10. 32, 33.)

2. *Repentance.* The precept of *Repentance* enjoyns, that we carefully turn and abstain from all that is evil; that we Live with great Care and Observation of our selves; that we frequently examine our Principles and Practice; that we sorrowfully confess our Faults to God, and ask forgiveness for them; and that we do the same towards Men, in Case of Injury or Scandal. (*Acts* 3. 19. 2 *Cor.* 13. 5. *Jam.* 5. 16. *Mat.* 5. 23.)

3. *Love of Enemies and of Christians.* The Law of Christ Obligeth us likewise, to Love and Pray for and do good to our Enemies; and to bear a most tender Affection, and shew singular kindness to our fellow Christians. (*Mat.* 5. 44. *John* 15. 12. *John* 17. 21, 23.)

4. *Heavenly-mindedness.* It is also the Duty of Christians, to *Think* of, to *Affect*, to *Desire* and *Hope* for that immortal Life and Blisse, which the Gospel hath brought to light; and to have but little consideration of the things of this Life, for which the *Gentiles* served their Gods, and the *Jews* the God of *Israel*; but to do good and to suffer patiently, *Looking for their Reward in Heaven.* (2 *Cor.* 4. 18. *Colos.* 3. 2. *Phil.* 3. 20.)

5. *Imitation of Christ.* And so it is also, to *Study* and *imitate* the Life of Christ; and having such a Pattern and Guide, to endeavour to excell in purity of Heart and Life, the best Examples of all other Institutions. (*John* 13. 14. *Mat.* 11. 29. *Mat.* 5. 46, 47.)

III. Instrumental. *Secondary Instructions.* The positive Institutions of Christ, are the means he hath appointed for the better observance of these primary Laws of his Religion, and they are,

1. *Prayer.* Prayer both Private and Publick, which is both an Act of Religion, and a special mean to keep up the

the Sense and Power thereof in our Hearts and Lives. (*Mat.* 6. 6. *Luke* 11. 2, 13.)

And so is the Ministry of the Word, by an Order of Men *fitted* and *appointed* for that purpose; an excellent mean, for informing the Judgments, awakening the Consciences, perswading the Hearts, and influencing the Lives of Christians. (*Eph.* 4. 11, 12, 13.) 2. *Ministry of the Word.*

Besides these Moral means, our Lord hath instituted two Rites, as *Instruments* and Helps of Religion.

By the one, *Baptism*, we are made Disciples of Christ, to learn that Religion which God the Father Taught by his Son, and confirmed by the holy Ghost: and oblige our selves to the Study, Profession, and Practice thereof. (*Mat.* 28. 19, 20.) 3. *Baptism.*

By the other, the *Lord's Supper*; we make a solemn Commemoration of the Death of our Blessed Lord and Saviour, which was the Sacrifice for our Sins, and at, and by which his Religion was set up, and are thereby put in mind of our mighty Obligations to Holiness, and of the great Assurance there is of Remission of Sins, and Resurrection to Eternal Life, for all those who Believe and Obey the Gospel. (*Luke* 22. 19, 20. *John* 6. 39, 40.) 4. *The Lord's Supper.*

This is the Religion of Christ: The proof whereof is contained in the History of his Life, and Death, Resurrection and Ascension, and sending of the holy Ghost If we consider these Facts, we must be convinced that Jesus is the Son God, and that his Religion is Divine, and that they who Believe and Obey him, shall be Happy by the forgiveness of their Sins, and a Resurrection to Life eternal. 5. *Demonstrations of Christianity.*

To set up such a Religion was a Work worthy of God, and to Receive and Obey it, is the greatest interest and concern of Men. We can neither blame the *Doctrine*, nor refute the *Proofs* of it; but Men become unbelievers by being resolvedly wicked; for they being Enemies to the Truth, will not receive it. We have more reason to give Credit to the things reported in the Gospels than to any thing else which we have not seen with our Eyes; and the Religion founded upon these Facts, is what we should wish to be true; and we run a mighty and a most desperate hazzard, even of the loss of our immortal Souls, by our neglect of it.

By our admittance into the Church, and the fellowship of Christians, we are freed from those Chains in which Satan holds the 6. *The Church.*

the Children of Darkneſs; we are mightily prevented with the Grace of God for our Inſtruction and Perſwaſion in the Truth; and mightily aſſured of his continual Aſſiſtance and Bleſſing upon our Religious Endeavours. That therefore which is incumbent upon us, is, by a due uſe of thoſe helps and means graciouſly afforded us, to get ſuch Religious Knowledge as is needful; and by the Divine Aſſiſtance (which is promiſed) to maſter our naughty Inclinations and vicious Habits, that we may Practice accordingly.

By being of this reformed Church of *England*, we have vaſt advantages for Religious Knowledge and Practice, which they want, who live where Chriſtianity is Debauched, and blended with Paganiſm: and how then ſhall we anſwer it to God, and our Lord Jeſus Chriſt; it by the abuſe of his *Grace*, and of our *Selves*, we continue Ignorant and Vicious as Papiſts or Pagans.

Let us not then Reproach the Author of our holy Religion, by being careleſs and negligent thereof; as if God had ſent his Son in vain, and given the holy Ghoſt to no purpoſe, and ſet up a Religion that is not worth our minding, nor let us be ſo fooliſh for our ſelves as to periſh by ſloath and ignorance, in our Rebellion againſt God; who of his infinite Mercies hath taken ſo much Care to Redeem us, and to make us Wiſe and Good, and ſo eternally Happy.

FINIS.

A Prayer.

O God the Father Almighty Maker of Heaven and Earth, we thy Creatures fall down with all humility to Worship thee; in whose Hands our Breath is, and before whom are all our Ways. It is but just and meet that we should Honour and Serve, Fear and Love, thee above all; for thou art the Author of our Beings, the Fountain of all our Enjoyments, and the God of all our Hopes. All thy ways towards us are Mercy and Goodness; thy loving kindness is better than Life; thy Service is perfect freedom; all thy Commandments are Faithful and Right; and in keeping of them there is great Reward.

Thou, O God, art Righteous, but we have done exceeding wickedly in following the imaginations of our foolish Hearts, to offend against thy holy Laws: We have provoked most justly thy Wrath and Indignation by our wicked Works; and have most grievously sinned against our own Souls.

But blessed be the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who so loved the World, that he hath given his only begotten Son, that believing in him we might not Perish, but may have everlasting Life, and hath exalted him to his own Right hand, to be a Prince and Saviour, to give Repentance and Remission of Sins! We beseech thee for his sake to pardon our manifold Sins and Errours, which we humbly and sorrowfully confess; and to grant that from henceforth we may cleave steadfastly unto thee in Righteousness, and Purity, in Humility and Charity, and all those Divine Vertues of which our blessed Redeemer hath given us so great an Example. Give us Grace to withstand the Temptations of the World, the Flesh, and the Devil; that with pure Hearts we may follow thee, the only God, treading in the blessed steps of thy Son our Saviour Jesus Christ. Make us Faithful in the use of all those blessed Advantages thou hast given us, for the renewing of our Minds, and restoring thine Image in us; and bless all thy sacred Appointments, for our increasing in Righteousness and Holiness. That so whilst we live here, a good Conscience may be our greatest Care, and Holiness our chief Delight; and we being reconciled to thy will, may Live and Dye in thy Peace and Favour, and at last through thy Mercy may be found meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the Saints in Life.

Hear us most gracious Father through the mediation of thy Son our Blessed Lord and Saviour, in whose most holy Name and Words we commend to thy Mercy and Protection our Selves and all Mankind; saying, Our Father, &c.